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to the *dele*, the chambers of the family and servants. The front part of the *dele*, next to the large entrance gate which occupies the whole width of the *dele*, and, consequently, of the front wall, is the scene of all the farm occupations that are not performed outdoors. Through the gateway the harvest wagons enter to be unloaded, the corn is thrashed here, etc. The back part of the *dele*, the "*flett*," is distinguished from the front part by a mosaic floor of small pebbles or stones, and figures as the general meeting and sitting room for the whole household. Here, in the centre of the back wall, is the large genial fireplace around which the family gathers, and from her seat by the fire the mistress of the house can watch the maids working in every part of the house. To this social function of the *dele* the architectural one corresponds. The distinctive structural feature of the Old-Saxon house is the comparative insignificance of the outside walls. The *dele* is the centre, structurally, too. The main supports of the whole house are not the walls, but the two rows of heavy oaken posts which hold the two parallel longitudinal walls of the *dele*. Each two of them are connected by transverse beams, and on them the rafters, and the whole roof, rest. The construction thus resembles that of a three-aisled church, more especially a basilica, and the side aisles could be removed walls, roof, and all, without injuring the safety of the main structure. To any one conversant with Mucke's "long-house" theory these descriptions of the author will be most interesting. The author does not, however, digress into the prehistoric problems of his subject; his purpose is to determine the geographic distribution of this interesting type of dwelling and to ascertain its boundaries before fire and modern building regulations shall have rendered this task impossible. He has personally explored, on foot, on wheel, and by train, almost every village and hamlet of Northern Germany, so that it is hard to imagine one specimen that should have escaped his notice. The result of his wanderings, of which the maps accompanying the book give us an approximate idea, is that the boundaries of this typical Low-German house are not identical with those of the Low-German dialects, nor with any special type of settlement. The book is one of the most valuable contributions to the home geography of Germany, for its contents as well as for the avenues of further research along similar lines which it opens; and with its 171 illustrations and 6 plates, all of them most beautifully executed, will be a treat for the lover of the picturesque of any nationality.

M. K. G.

Beiträge zur Geophysik. viii Band, 1. Heft. Leipzig, George Engelmann, 1906.

This issue of the *Beiträge* contains seven papers, three of which deal with seismic problems. The first is an article by Charles Davison, Sc.D., F.G.S., on "*The relative velocity of earthquake waves and earthquake-sound waves.*" The author questions the theory generally accepted by seismologists that, because the sound of an earthquake is often heard before the shock is felt, sound waves travel with greater velocity than earthquake waves. According to that theory, the percentage of observers who heard the sound before the shock came ought to increase, and the percentage of those who heard it with or after the shock ought to decrease, with the increasing distance from the earthquake centre. His observations of English earthquakes, however, showed that both classes of observers decreased in proportion to the increasing distance. He concludes, therefore, that the early sound waves take their origin, not at the centre, but at the nearer margin of the seismic focus, so that their velocity need differ but little, if at all, from that of the earthquake waves.

In another paper the same author offers observations on "*the Effects of an Observer's Conditions on his Perception of an Earthquake.*" This means that, while the maximum of frequency as registered by instruments occurs about noon, the one based on personal observations occurs at 10 P.M. and at 2 A.M., viz.: at times when quiet prevails or, aroused from their first sleep, people will lie awake and be sensitive to the slightest tremors. Furthermore, observers indoors describe identical shocks as longer than do those who feel them outdoors. Observers in town, too, often mistake artificial tremors for genuine earthquakes and compare the sounds to passing wagons, etc., while the rural observer likens them to thunder, wind, etc. The position of houses influences observations in so far as shocks are more readily felt in buildings whose main walls stand perpendicularly to the direction of the shock. In badly built houses, shocks are felt more strongly on the upper stories than on the ground floor. Persons just roused from sleep describe the same shock very differently from those who were awake when it came. Thus, records of intensity, duration, direction, audibility, and nature of sound may be biased by subjective conditions for which allowance must be made in working up personal observations.

In a third paper: "*Ostasiatischer Erdbebenkatalog,*" Dr. E. Rudolph reproduces the observations made at the seismic and meteorological stations of Tokio, Manila, Batavia, Koeta Radja (Atjeh, Sumatra), and Si-ka-wei (Shang-hai). He reiterates De Ballore's plea for a more even distribution of seismological stations in the far East.

Wilhelm Krebs (*Staubfälle, besonders im Passatgebiet des nördlichen Atlantik*) records observations on atmospheric dust from the log books of German merchantmen in the region of the North Atlantic trade belt, pointing out the parallelism between the increased frequency of this phenomenon and the volcanic activities of 1901-1903.

Dr. Th. Arltdt (*Parallelismus auf der Erdoberfläche*) presents tables and formulas for the measuring of absolute, orthodromic, and loxodromic, parallelism by means of which the arrangement of the tectonic features of the earth's surface may be mathematically determined; Karl Fuchs (*Wirkung der fluterzeugenden Kräfte auf die Massenelemente*) describes a method of deriving local effects of the tide-producing forces from local conditions, and Dr. G. Greim (*Studien aus dem Paznaun II. Der Jamtalferner*) contributes a paper and map on observations made at the Jam Valley glacier which prove a recession of glaciation in that valley.

M. K. G.

Höhlenkunde, mit Berücksichtigung der Karstphänomene. Von

W. v. Knebel. Braunschweig, Friedrich Vieweg und Sohn, 1906. 42 Illustrations and 4 Plates. (Price, M. 5.50.)

For purposes of classification, the author distinguishes between caves of primary origin (*ursprüngliche Höhlen*), viz.: caves formed during the process of formation of the rocks in which they are found, and caves of secondary origin (*später gebildete Höhlen*), viz.: such as were hollowed out of the existing rock by outside agencies—water, wind, etc. Among the former the most important are the lava caves, formed by a stream of lava flowing away under the hardened surface of the flow and leaving a cavity under that surface, as, for instance, the Surtshellir Cave in Iceland. Caves of secondary origin are either genuine (*echte*) or pseudo-caves (*Halbhöhlen*), the latter including sea-caves, desert-caves (due to wind erosion), glacier-caves, and the like. Genuine caves are